IN SEARCH OF EVIDENCE

Measuring Community Engagement: A Pilot Study

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Recent discussions about the inclusion of the community engagement agenda as part of the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes and calls for Third Stream funding have highlighted the need for some measures of university-community engagement. Such measures of engagement should offer tangible evidence of the role that universities play in the educational, social and economic wellbeing of local communities and the nation more broadly. In Search of Evidence builds on the self-audit of Victorian universities undertaken for the Department of Education and Training, Victoria in 2005, reported in Beyond Rhetoric: University-Community Engagement in Victoria. One of the recommendations made was for the development of appropriate indicators for engagement in Research and Teaching Quality frameworks.

The pilot project therefore investigates the practicality of using currently collected and published information to report against a set of indicators to determine the type and extent of community engagement activity in Victorian universities. This will involve the examination of national and international literature in order to develop a preliminary set of indicators, which will then be tested against the data available at Victorian universities. A major condition for such an indicator set is that it does not generate yet another demand on universities to generate data, but that it can operate within the framework of the current data collected and reported by universities. The intention therefore of this report is not to suggest a new suite of indicators but to select from those that have been suggested in the literature, a set which could be applied to evaluate the nature of community-university engagement in Victoria. Or, to be more precise, to actually assess whether such an approach might work.

To test this, a two-stage approach is used. First, on the basis of a comprehensive international literature review an attempt is made to draw up a set of indicators relevant to the concept of community engagement. Second, using information available in the public domain, i.e. published reports and data contained on university websites, we investigate the extent to which the indicator set can be populated to constitute a reasonable understanding of the community engagement activities within and between universities in Victoria.

The international literature search resulted in six sets of indicators and protocols that could prove useful in the development of a set of indicators for community engagement. These indicator sets were evaluated for their usefulness to the objective of this project based on the following criteria: Relevance, Reliability, Transparency, Availability, Auditability and Cost. This assessment resulted in the selection of the so-called Russel Group Indicators, which had the highest overall score (according to those criteria) and also provided the most comprehensive coverage of what in the broadest sense may be captured under the heading of community engagement. We opted to continue the project with that set, while adding in a number of other relevant measures. A trial run consisting of an analysis of existing Victorian university reports and other available forms of data was undertaken to see to what extent the suggested set of indicators could indeed be viably used to determine the extent of community engagement. The outcomes of this trial run were disappointing. Our research suggests that at present there is insufficient information reported to even superficially understand the level of community engagement being undertaken by a university. We believe that this is not the result of the indicator set selected, but is the consequence of what universities report – or not report for that matter – in the area of community engagement. Real reporting of achievements against stated intention only takes place to a very limited extent.
KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY FINDINGS

- Community engagement can be defined as the mechanism through which universities achieve the goals they have articulated in relation to specific communities in terms of their trinity of basic functions, i.e. teaching, research and service, whether at the strategic university level, or in project specific contexts.

- A number of reporting protocols have been produced to facilitate the assessment of University performance in relation to their function as institutions of teaching, research, and service.

- There seems to be a dominance of indicators to measure commercialisation, technology transfer and spin-offs.

- At the university level, typically the notion of university-community engagement is enshrined in Mission & Vision Statements and/or the Strategic Plan. Yet, these goals and objectives in general do not seem to be well supported by formal reporting.

- Anecdotal evidence suggests that on the whole many university managers are not aware of the breadth of community engagement that currently occurs within their own institutions.

- If community engagement is reported upon, it is done in an inconsistent and qualitative way (which is intended here as a statement of fact rather than implying that quantitative is to be preferred over qualitative).

- Where there is more detailed information, it is generally found at the faculty or, more often, department/school levels. Yet again we need to note that this type of reporting is ad-hoc, primarily qualitative and by no means consistent across an institution.

- It is suggested that in theory it is possible to arrive at a set of indicators that perhaps may not be comprehensive, but that is robust enough in international comparative terms to serve as a workable operationalisation of the concept of engagement.

- Examining the extent of community engagement on the basis of currently reported and readily available information, is as yet an impossibility.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- While not asking universities to collect new data, the reporting of existing data could take better account of university-community engagement activities;

- Universities may wish to consider publishing, based on their particular mission and objectives, what they consider to be their own best/good practice with respect to university-community engagement;

- University institutional planning offices may wish to explore the quantitative application of the performance indicators identified in this report to their organisations' performance with respect to university-community engagement; and

- While it is apparent that successful university-community engagement involves institutional support and acknowledgement at all levels of seniority, this will only be achieved when the real benefits of engagement, particularly on the university side of the equation, are acknowledged and become a recognised part of the university culture.
Universities are no longer simply educational institutions, if ever they were. They increasingly have a responsibility to, amongst other things, provide research that is nationally and regionally relevant. As a result, the engagement of communities in many aspects of a university’s functioning is gaining prominence both in practice and in the literature. And engagement as such is becoming another dimension on which a university is judged, by governments as well as other stakeholders. Seen from a slightly different perspective, it also becomes a set of activities through which the university itself can demonstrate its relevance to the wider society. In line with this, the notion of benchmarks and performance indicators that enable determination of a university’s socio-economic and cultural contributions to its region has gained prominence. To date, however, little has been achieved in the development of robust measures reflecting the benefits that flow from such partnerships to both universities and the communities with which they engage.

The pilot project examines the possibility of drawing up a viable set of indicators for community engagement based upon an investigation of the relevant international literature. A major condition for such an indicator set is that it does not result in yet another demand on universities to generate data, but that it can operate within the framework of the current data collected by universities. To test this, a two-stage approach is used. First, on the basis of a comprehensive international literature review, an attempt is made to draw up a set of indicators relevant to the concept of community engagement. Second, using information available in the public domain, i.e. published reports and data contained on university websites, we investigate the extent to which the indicator set can be populated to constitute a reasonable understanding of the community engagement activities of Victorian universities. Since community engagement can mean many things to many people, we first provide a brief overview of this concept.

1. INTRODUCTION
Principles of community, or civic, engagement are not new. Universities, individual academic staff, and students, have long worked for principles of public good and local benefit through teaching, research, and civic involvement (Harkavy and Benson, 1998; Ostrander, 2004; Bond and Paterson, 2005). Since the 1980s, however, a reemphasis on principles of community engagement has become evident, and the civic role of many universities has been formalised in their mission and goals as a ‘core value’ (Association of Commonwealth Universities, 2001). However, little effort has been focused on how this type of activity might be measured. The increased attention to principles and strategies of community engagement has occurred in a context in which universities are no longer the only producers of knowledge, and where they appear to be more focussed on private gain rather than community benefit; on research rather than teaching; and on raising private revenue (Boyer, 1990; Colby et al., 2003; Calhoun, 2006).

“The advancing claim is that universities must have some link to and serve some useful purpose in addressing the major issues of the day or else they become socially irrelevant” (Ostrander, 2004:76).

2. DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.1. A Short History of University-Community Engagement

2.2. The Ideal of an Engaged Institution

More broadly, the concern with university-community engagement needs to be understood in the context of a larger concern about disengagement from civic society and decreasing political engagement and participation (Harkavy and Benson 1998).

“The work of the engaged campus is responsive to community-identified needs, opportunities and goals in ways that are appropriate to the campus’ mission and academic strengths.” … “These interactions enrich and expand the learning and discovery functions of the academic institution while also enhancing community capacity” and building “greater public understanding of the role of the campus as a knowledge asset and resource” (Institute for Regional and Rural Research, 2004:1). The engaged institution draws on its academic strengths and resources (physical, social and intellectual) to benefit both the university and its community. Benefits include the building of social capital, contributing to the resolution of local issues, the wellbeing of the community, local support, and economic growth. The engaged institution is not only proactive, but also responsive to issues of relevance to, and identified by, the local community. Community engagement is an umbrella term that refers to a wide variety of principles and practices, and include:

- community-university partnerships to address questions of mutual concern;
- strategies of economic and social regional development;
- teaching and learning for civic participation (including service learning);
- collaboration with local business and industry;
- support for social and cultural initiatives; and
- locally relevant and applied teaching and research.

As a caveat, it must be noted that the above description is not designed to foreclose other possibilities and that strategies and principles of community engagement are usually negotiated within specific university-community partnerships.
Longley (2005: 92-3) further notes that in 2002, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation identified key characteristics of effective engagement between higher education institutions and their communities.

Key Characteristics of Quality Engagement:

1. See their present and future well-being as inextricably linked;
2. Engage in reciprocal learning;
3. Respect the history, culture, knowledge and wisdom of the other;
4. Create structures that promote open communication and equity with one another;
5. Value and promote diversity; and
6. Regularly conduct a joint assessment of their partnership and report results.

While Scott and Jackson (2005:162) propose that:

- a university may engage with its communities at a number of levels, and the level of engagement may vary according to the community addressed. The possible levels are:
  1. An irreducible and unavoidable element of existing university activities – assumes all research and teaching ultimately involves engagement with the community, either directly or indirectly and with social, economic and/or cultural impacts.
  2. A separate and mainly voluntary activity by academics and students – the ‘service’ view.
  3. Community engagement and service as a central overriding goal of higher education – deliberately embedded within all teaching, learning and research functions (the engaged university).
  4. Community engagement as a systematically pursued partnership for mutual benefit – with shared values and aspirations between the university and the community. While it is apparent that successful university-community engagement involves institutional support and acknowledgement at all levels of seniority (Association of Commonwealth Universities, 2001; Holland, 2001; Winter et al., 2005), this will only be achieved when the real benefits of engagement, particularly on the university side of the equation, are acknowledged and become a recognised part of the university culture. Which is where potentially some problems may lie (see Section 3.1).
2.3. A Working Definition

In order to define what we mean by *Community Engagement* it is important to firstly explore the concept of *Community*. The term is normally used to describe a group of people defined by their geographic location, for example, the community of Armidale, or the Dutch community of Sydney. The term is also used to define conceptual and / or functional groups brought together through “…learning, practice, interest, profession, identity or culture” (SPF Community Indicators Working Group, 2002:3). The SPF Community Indicators Working Group (2002:4), in their work on indicators for RMIT University, noted that the term has been used by some scholars “…to mean a form of social organization which has the following five characteristics: human scale; identity and belonging; obligations; *Gemeinschaft*; and culture”.

There are many and differing definitions of community described in the literature: “Some uses of the term include communities based on a place, a function, or a combination of the two. Examples of communities include those of learning; region; development; interest; practice; profession; identity; culture” (Adams et al., 2005:27). It is clear then that a definition of community in this context needs to extend beyond the geographical boundary. In the context of Universities, a community could include its alumni, students and staff, those both internal and external, industry, professional bodies, other education institutions, and government (Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance, 2005) while “virtual communities are also becoming increasingly important” (Adams et al., 2005:26). It needs to be noted here, though, that a community will be defined by the context of the question being explored, the role they/it might play in a project or the stake they/it might have in the partnership arrangement. For example, the community of interest for a project investigating the impact of the hills hoist on the Australian identity will be very different to that which might be involved in a course advisory board for a Law Degree.

Community engagement therefore can be defined as the mechanism through which universities achieve the goals they have articulated in relation to specific communities in terms of their trinity of basic functions, i.e. teaching, research and service, whether at the strategic university level, or in project specific contexts.

(adapted from Delaforce 2004).
3. UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

3.1. Some Words of Caution

In assessing university-community engagement, it is commonly recognised that significant efforts are directed towards the development of meaningful partnerships in project and personality specific contexts. It is this type of ad hoc engagement that seems to dominate practice at present. A major problem is that this type of engagement occurs in situ rather than at the strategic level. Consequently, anecdotal evidence suggests that on the whole many university managers are not aware of the breadth of community engagement that currently occurs within their own institutions, which might be because these activities are generally not reported in a formal way. We will return to this issue later in the report. But we should not close our eyes to the fact that despite prevailing rhetoric it is by no means self-evident that community engagement is an institutionalised element in the culture of a university. We know from studies into the effect of quality assurance at the ‘shop floor’, that teaching has increased in importance and has become a promotion criterion next to research performance, even at the traditional classic research universities. Though we also know that research remains dominant (eg. Frederiks, Westerheijden & Weusthof, 1993; Scheele, Maassen & Westerheijden, 1998). Community engagement in the Australian context plays a limited role in internal workload policies, but that is still a far cry from constituting grounds for promotion. And we know for a fact from our knowledge of the sector, that certainly not every academic sees it as a crucial part of his or her work. Being not at the forefront of the academic mind, nor of prime importance when it comes to the ever important issue of generating revenue, it is not at all self-evident that community engagement is sharply delineated and defined in the mindset of institutional policymakers and administrators. Which, as has been identified earlier, may well mean that hard data on the subject is hard to find, despite the spectrum of activities undertaken.

3.2. Policy Context for Victorian Universities in relation to CE

Governments, not only in Australia, have come to recognise the important role that university-community engagement can play in knowledge-based economies. Subsequently, this has come to be reflected in the broader policy environment within which universities operate both at the federal and state levels in Australia. The following provides a very brief description of this environment, as we assume it may have a bearing on how institutions deal with this challenge.

3.2.1 MCEETYA Declaration

A joint declaration in 2002 by the federal and state governments called Stepping forward – improving pathways for all young people through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training, Youth Affairs and Community Service (MCEETYA), initiated the Nelson Higher Education Reforms (Federal) and the Education Training Reform for the Future (States). The declaration “...gives broad direction to education reform ... [and to] ... education sector community relationships” (Delaforce, 2004:4) and applies to all levels of education in Australia. The declaration focuses on the transition of young people into further education or careers, the diverse and changing needs of youth and the development of local partnerships and strategic alliances (Delaforce, 2004:4). Specifically in relation to community engagement, the declaration reinforces (Delaforce, 2004:5)

… that education institutions should:
actively and meaningfully participate in their communities; collaborate and communicate within and between each other, broader agencies and community; optimise the delivery of learning and learning pathways particularly for young Australians through integrations and facilitate informed decision making.
During 2002 the then Minister for Education Science and Training Dr Brenden Nelson through his Department produced a set of discussion papers, of which some specifically encourage collaboration between higher education and the community (Delaforce, 2004:5). These are:

- Higher Education at the Crossroads – An Overview Paper, April 2002;
- Striving for Quality – Learning, Teaching and Scholarship, June 2002;
- Varieties of Excellence – Diversity, Specialisation and Regional Engagement, July 2002; and

As an example of the intent, Higher Education at the Crossroads (Department of Education Science and Training, 2002: Section 4, Para 109) states that:

higher education institutions need to be responsive to the social, economic and cultural needs of the communities in which they are located and foster a more active engagement with these communities. The obligation for community engagement is one that rests with all higher education institutions, but regional institutions and campuses clearly have a special responsibility to their communities. Their locations present particular challenges.

These papers, in combination with Our Universities Backing Australia’s Future, which was released in May 2003, provide the framework for community engagement within the education sector.

Despite this policy statement, the formal reporting requirements of universities, namely through the Institution Assessment Framework, on their community engagement activity is as yet lacking depth. The framework, previously known as Education Profiles, provides a clear articulation of the Commonwealth’s accountability requirements (Department of Education Science and Training, 2006:online) which focuses on 4 key elements, namely: organisational sustainability; achievements in higher education provision, quality outcomes; and compliance. There are some engagement reporting requirements relating to Part 4: Indigenous Education Statement (Department of Education Science and Training, 2005:14), but that is as far as it goes.

In April 2001 the Association of Commonwealth Universities released a consultation document calling for engagement to become a ‘core value’ for universities (see Association of Commonwealth Universities, 2001). This document outlines a considered path toward defining the reasons for, and benefits to, engaged institutions and their communities. It also provides a set of 31 questions that institutional leaders might ask to determine their level of engagement, these are presented in Section 4.2.5 of this document. But again it should be noted that this is nothing more than a consultation document.

In a ministerial statement from 2002, the Hon. Lynne Kosky outlined the Victorian Government’s Commitment to university-community engagement and also promoted the view that universities are the catalysts for the future development of the State (see Department of Education and Training 2002: 2-5). To paraphrase from that document, the Victorian Government recognises that the “active engagement of universities in the social, economic and cultural
development of ‘their communities’ is a vital part of a universities contribution to the States ‘innovation economy’. The Victorian Government also commits to entering ‘into partnership agreements with Victorian universities to more effectively coordinate its investment and engagement with the higher education sector’.

To conclude, some words of caution indeed appear to be called for. Though community engagement features clearly in the policy statements at both the national and institutional policy level, it appears not to be absorbed in the institutional culture nor in the ‘harder’ parts of government policy. Formal reporting requirements in this respect are minimal and institutional drivers to a large extent appear absent. Which could well have major implications for measuring engagement.

3.3. Potential impact of the internal and external environment

To conclude, some words of caution indeed appear to be called for. Though community engagement features clearly in the policy statements at both the national and institutional policy level, it appears not to be absorbed in the institutional culture nor in the ‘harder’ parts of government policy. Formal reporting requirements in this respect are minimal and institutional drivers to a large extent appear absent. Which could well have major implications for measuring engagement.
4. MEASURING ENGAGEMENT

Many wise words have been spoken when it comes to measuring engagement. The New Generation Universities (2005 in Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance, 2005:6)

…note metrics are required to measure performance in terms of community engagement. In particular these need to:

1. Measure and evaluate the contribution made by individual universities to the social, cultural and economic development of society;

2. Enable the development of a flexible funding method that allows universities to be funded appropriately according to their identified third mission strengths;

3. Identify and support best practice; and

4. Demonstrate that third stream funding would create value for money.

Further to this, Garlick (2002 in Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance, 2005:6-7)

…identifies criteria for an engaged university which provides a potential framework for an evaluation model:

- Engagement is reflected in the institution’s mission;

- The community is involved in the campus in “continuous, purposeful and authentic ways”;

- The curriculum contains a variety of ways for students to engage in the community;

- The institution has a policy environment that supports engagement;

- Individuals throughout the university play leadership roles in engagement;

- The campus approach to scholarship includes interdisciplinary work;

- The engagement work is publicised and celebrated; and

- Engagement activities are held to a high standard of excellence and are rigorously evaluated.

Yet we need to recognise that all of this remains rather abstract and does not provide us with directly useable indicators. But it could be part of a framework from which a set of indicators could be derived.
4.1. A Typology of University Engagement

A starting point for such a framework could be a typology of partnerships or engagement types, such as that developed by Adams et al. (2005:30). They found that the typology [they adapted from the University of Minnesota which is reproduced below] was a powerful tool to map partnership activity with a community. By mapping all the partners of a group with a given community and applying the typology to the partners, a group could view their engagement with that community and develop very sophisticated and useful understandings of their work to inform strategic planning and resource allocation.

### UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA TYPOLOGY OF COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

1. **Consultative Partnership.** In this kind of relationship, a faculty member, unit, department, or school has the same relationship to a client as a self-employed or privately established consultant. Some of the elements of a Consultative Partnership:

   - The relationship is temporary or intermittent; the main work of the client will continue after the consultative event, hopefully in an improved manner, and the consultant will not be identified as a partner or co-equal in this main work
   - Contact can be initiated by either party
   - Part of the work might be to help a client identify a need for the consultative service
   - The consultant provides a format, strategy, or process for addressing the client’s need
   - The consultant provides needed expertise
   - (Optional) the consultant relationship lends a certain cachet to the client’s venture

2. **Technical Assistance Partnership.** In this kind of relationship, a client entity has much more comprehensive responsibility for identifying a need and specifying an outcome or product of the relationship:

   - The client defines the partnership environment - by identifying the scope of work or the limits of involvement of the partner
   - The partner is not identified as a partner in the larger agenda in which the technical assistance is contextualized
The work is specialized, and the performance of the work draws attention to the special expertise of the technical assistant

(Optional) the technical assistant relationship lends a certain cachet to the client’s venture

3. Partnership of Convenience. This is the conceptual converse of the Consultative Partnership in that it is a relationship initiated by an academic entity (faculty member, department, school, etc.) with an external party.

- The relationship is project-linked (i.e., specific in nature) and often time-limited.
- There is an identified exchange of some sort (e.g., in exchange for cooperation/collaboration, there will be a service, status, fiscal, etc benefit to the external partner)

4. Generative Partnership. This is a relationship between some part of the academy and some external entity that produces something - deliberately vague - that takes on its own life. As such, this third entity may begin to interact independently with each of its progenitors.

- The initiating relationship may be initiated by either party
- The partnership may begin de novo or may grow out of (or be discovered within) other partnership relationships
- At some point the initiating parties recognize a changed relationship, one that acknowledges at least the partial independence of the partner-created entity

5. Partnerships for Mutual Benefit. In this relationship, an academic and an external entity recognize that each can gain from working on a common project.

- Either side may initiate the partnership
- The work depends on the partnership and will not continue past the partnership (i.e., both sides are relatively equal in their ownership of the project)
- The partnership is co terminal with the continued benefit to each side (this implies that each side can see the benefit of the arrangement)

6. Outreach. In this relationship between academic entities and either organizations (including communities) and/or individuals, the balance of power tilts towards the academic entity.

- This activity is initiated by the academic entity
- Recipients may have been queried about their needs so as to make the academic product relevant
- The activity may be designed to address the good of the recipient as identified through the expertise of the academic entity
- The activity fits the mission of the academic entity

Source: (Council on Public Engagement, 2002:online)
4.2. Indicators Currently in Use

4.2.1. Introduction

Numerous scholars (e.g. Adams et al., 2005; Ball & Wilkinson, 1994; Charles & Benneworth, 2002; Gahin & Paterson, 2001; Garlick & Pryor, 2004; Higher Education Funding Council of England, 2005; Molas-Gallart et al., 2002; SPF Community Indicators Working Group, 2002) have written on the topic of indicators for community engagement and proposed sets of indicators that might be useful in evaluating the benefits, costs and otherwise of university-community interactions. The intention therefore of this report is not to suggest yet another suite of indicators but to select from those that have been suggested in the literature, a set which will then be applied to evaluate the nature of community-university engagement in Victoria. Or, to be more precise, to actually assess whether such an approach might work.

An international literature search provided us with the following sets of indicators and protocols that might be applicable for analysing the extent of community engagement activity: the Russell report indicators, the OECD’s regional development protocol, the Charles and Benneworth benchmarks, the Gibbons questions, the RMIT indicators, and the Global Reporting Initiative. We will present these in the subsequent sections of this report.

4.2.2. Russell Report Indicators

The Russell Group of Universities in the United Kingdom commissioned a report by the Science and Technology Policy Research Unit at the University of Sussex to provide advise on “…an analytical framework and a comprehensive set of indicators that may assist in the tracking and management of university Third Stream activities” (Molas-Gallart et al. 2002:iii). They present a set of around 60 possible indicators and select 34 based on the SMART principle (Simple, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, and Timely). As illustrated in their framework diagram (Molas-Gallart et al., 2002:iii), reproduced here as Figure 1, the indicators are assigned to third stream activities, which are further categorised by capability and activity. Their full list of indicators is provided as Appendix 1.
The OECD is currently undertaking, through its Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) program, a comparative study on the regional impact of universities. Expected to result in a comprehensive analysis in 2007, the study uses the following protocol that has bearing on our quest for community engagement indicators (see Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, n.d.:10-12).

Figure 1: The Russel Report conceptual framework for analysing Third Stream activities
National

1. Has government set out a statement of its policies for regional engagement of higher education and what is its scope? What processes were used to develop it, get commitment to it and implement it.

2. What data analysis has been performed to establish the demand and supply of different types of higher education ‘product’?

3. What is known about the contribution that HE makes to the regions? How accessible is this information and what are its key dimensions.

4. What resources are made available to HEIs by government to support regional engagement – how are these distributed?

5. What incentives and support does government provide to support regional engagement of HEIs?

6. What is the scope of the national policy for regional engagement of HEIs?

7. Are there clear objectives and/or targets in respect of regional engagement of HEIs? How were these developed.

8. What is the potential for increasing the contribution that HEIs make to the regions and what are the issues associated with any increase?

9. Does government monitor the contribution that HEIs make to the region and if so, how?

10. How does government evaluate the success of HEIs in regional engagement?

11. Are there any tensions between regional engagement policy and other policies (e.g. funding excellence) – if so, how are these resolved?

Regional Agencies

1. What is the role of the agency generally, and what specifically in respect of HE?

2. Has the agency set out a statement of its policies for regional engagement of higher education and what is its scope? What processes were used to develop it, get commitment to it and implement it.

3. What are the key responsibilities of and key relationships with HEIs in respect of regional engagement?

4. What data analysis has been performed to establish the demand and supply of different types of higher education ‘product’ within the region?

5. What is known about the contribution that HE makes to the region?
6. What incentives and support does the agency provide to support regional engagement of HEIs?

7. Are there clear objectives and/or targets in respect of regional engagement of HEIs?

8. What is the potential for increasing the contribution that HEIs make to the region and what are the issues associated with any increase?

9. Does the agency monitor the contribution that HEIs make to the region and if so, how?

10. What resources are made available to HEI’s by the agency to support regional engagement – how are these distributed?

11. How does the agency evaluate the success of HEIs in regional engagement?

12. Are there any tensions between regional engagement policy and other policies (e.g. funding excellence) – if so, how are these resolved?

13. Are HEIs engaged in the governance of the region?

14. Do HEIs make a contribution to the understanding of the region by their research programme?

15. What mechanisms exist to coordinate the activities of HE in regional engagement with those of other participants?

16. Has the agency identified any good practice in respect of regional engagement of HEI’s and if so how has this been disseminated.

**Institutions**

1. Is regional engagement part of the institutions mission?

2. Is regional engagement reflected in the institutions planning and resource allocation processes?

3. How has the institution developed an understanding of the needs of the region?

4. Who are they key partners that the HEI works with and what is their individual role and responsibilities?

5. What incentives are provided to the HEI? What else would be helpful?

6. How does the institution know if it is successful in this area of activity?
7. What, if any, arrangements does the institution have in place to ensure it meets the needs of the region?

8. How is the institution increasing
   a. the degree of social inclusion
   b. the sustainability of the region
   c. the economic development of the region
   d. community regeneration within the region
   e. entrepreneurship within the region
   f. use of community cultural facilities

9. What incentives and/or support does the institution offer its staff to encourage them to participate in regional engagement?

10. What contribution does the HEI make to the regional cultural identity?

11. What arrangements and plans does the HEI have to develop its capacity for regional engagement?

12. How is the activity of the HEI coordinated with those of other partners?

13. Are there any tensions between the objectives of the HEI and regional stakeholders, if so, how are these managed?

14. What are the main opportunities for greater regional engagement?

15. What is the main barriers to greater regional engagement?

**SOURCE:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, n.d.:10-12

Those that would apply to the present study directly are those questions that are focused upon the institutional level, however these are highly focused on economic development rather than the more generic concept of community engagement.

### 4.2.4. Charles & Benneworth Benchmarks

Charles and Benneworth (2002) developed a benchmarking tool to enable higher education institutions to assess their regional contribution with reference to the needs of the regions in which they operate. The intention being that institutions will be able to “identify priorities and work towards good practice” (Charles & Benneworth, 2002:3), rather than as a mechanism to allocate funds within the institution through ranking.

The benchmarking tool they developed has three functions (Charles & Benneworth, 2002:2):

- to assess improvements in the strategy, performance and outcomes of [higher education institution] HEI regional engagement
- to help the HEI set its strategic priorities
- to support joint strategies within a regional partnership.
They (Charles & Benneworth, 2002:3) further note that:

The objective is to give individual HEIs a means of assessing their regional impact. The key challenge is to highlight not just linear relations between an HEI and its region, but also a wide range of strategic interactions. Strategic priorities for regional engagement should be regional development processes which link between, for example, economic development and educational attainment, or community regeneration and the formation of new firms.

Their benchmarking tool consists of 33 benchmarks (reproduced below) which can be categorised as either focused on practice or performance. This distinction then enables an examination of the spread of engagement across the range of regional development activities “and where the balance is between current performance and those practices needed to ensure improvement in future” (Charles & Benneworth, 2002:6).

THE CHARLES AND BENNEWORTH BENCHMARKS

1. Enhancing regional framework conditions
   - Benchmark 1.1 Engagement in regional infrastructure planning and assessment
   - Benchmark 1.2 Investment in a high quality campus
   - Benchmark 1.3 Using HEI demand as lever to upgrade infrastructure

2. Human capital development processes
   - Benchmark 2.1 Access for students from disadvantaged groups
   - Benchmark 2.2 Retention of graduates in the region
   - Benchmark 2.3 Involvement in regional skills strategies
   - Benchmark 2.4 Responsiveness to regional labour market demands
   - Benchmark 2.5 Involvement of employers in developing the curriculum
   - Benchmark 2.6 Course provision for employers and employees

3. Business development processes
   - Benchmark 3.1 Strategic plan for business support
   - Benchmark 3.2 Creation of spin-off firms
   - Benchmark 3.3 Engagement in inward investment
   - Benchmark 3.4 Promoting graduate entrepreneurship
   - Benchmark 3.5 Graduate start-ups arising from HEI programmes
   - Benchmark 3.6 Availability of entrepreneurship modules
   - Benchmark 3.7 Student placements with local employers
   - Benchmark 3.8 Incentives for staff to engage with business

4. Interactive learning and social capital development processes
   - Benchmark 4.1 Involvement in regional governance
   - Benchmark 4.2 Contribution to regional economic analysis
   - Benchmark 4.3 Analysis of regional futures
   - Benchmark 4.4 Staff exchanges

5. Redistributive processes
   - Benchmark 5.1 Contributing to healthy cities and health promotion
   - Benchmark 5.2 Support for community-based regeneration
   - Benchmark 5.3 Student community action
6. Cultural development
   Benchmark 6.1 Cultural strategy
   Benchmark 6.2 Provision of cultural facilities
   Benchmark 6.3 Impact on local tourism
   Benchmark 6.4 Levels of participation by the community
   Benchmark 6.5 Fostering regional cultural identities
   Benchmark 6.6 HEI spin-offs to the cultural sector

7. Promoting sustainability
   Benchmark 7.1 Sustainability at the heart of HEI governance
   Benchmark 7.2 Promoting sustainability through the curriculum
   Benchmark 7.3 Performance against environmental management systems

SOURCE: Charles and Benneworth (2002:12)

4.2.5. Gibbons Questions – Association of Commonwealth Universities

In a report, *Engagement as a Core Value for the University*, the Association of Commonwealth Universities (2001:41-43) developed a set of “... questions that institutional leaders might ask in order to gauge the institution’s level and location of engagement. It is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather more indicative to facilitate further discussion and exploration”. These questions are reproduced verbatim below.

THE GIBBONS QUESTIONS

The imperative of engagement

1. In its mission statement or strategic plan, how does the university recognise its responsibilities to its city and region, to the local and national economy and to society (voters, taxpayers) at large?

2. What mechanisms or fora does the university have to engage with learners and the community at large to identify their needs and to have input into university programmes?

3. By what means do academics explain to the lay public the special value of the academic enterprise and what it contributes to the society that supports it?

4. What form does the university’s engagement with industry and the public services take? Is it clear who is responsible for promoting engagement activities?

5. How can we learn from other academics’ experiences of ‘engagement’?
6. How do we evaluate whether we have achieved what we intended?

**Purposes and policies**

7. Can our universities look to an independent national forum at the highest level where academics, key stakeholders/beneficiaries and business people can mark out areas of common interest, agree policy priorities and offer a joint voice about university development to government, universities and employers, public and private?

8. How do we ensure that we make the best use of those employers and other lay people who sit on the university’s own governing bodies?

9. In what way do those who allocate funds to us encourage and guide the university in making strategic plans that take account of our wider responsibilities?

10. What relationships does the university have with the various professional bodies and how are these relationships reflected in our programmes?

11. Are there appropriate regional fora that provide opportunities for local communities and other stakeholders to share in and contribute to the activities of the university?

**The world is our student**

12. Is first-class teaching promoted, recognised and rewarded in the university on a level with research? Are we confident that the incentive system encourages different levels of engagement?

13. How aware are the academic departments of what sort of employment most of their graduates are destined for?

14. What means have lecturers for seeking feedback from employers on how well prepared they think graduates are? How does such information inform the design and updating of degree courses?

15. Is there a policy on what attributes, including generic personal and intellectual capabilities we help our students to develop that will enable them to make the best of their personal and working lives? (Those might include, for example, competence with language and communication, numeracy or appreciation of the arts)

16. What national debate is there in which we can participate about how students can best be prepared to contribute effectively to the future working world? How are such matters addressed within the university?

17. How do we ensure that students leave us able and eager to continue learning?

18. How do work-based learning (mainly for employed graduates or students) and structured work experience (mainly for young first degree students) figure in the learning we offer?
19. How can we work with employers and professional bodies to offer employees regular opportunities of updating themselves and, above all, for reflecting with their peers on the real life challenges they face?

20. How far do public bodies, charged with allocating funds to universities and/or overseeing quality and standards, encourage the university to help students develop ‘attributes for employability and citizenship’?

The dialogue of theory with practice

21. What mechanisms does our country have to allow academics and other key stakeholders to share in setting broad national research priorities?

22. How do research-users have a proper say in the selection of research proposals for funding?

23. What efforts are made to help the community gain a true appreciation of the value of academic research?

24. What government, or other, schemes and incentives are there to encourage industry and academics to co-operative research between academics and (for example) industry, community groups, the professions, government agencies, artists and traders?

25. How does this university aim to get promising discoveries exploited? How is our bank of specialised knowledge made available to other people or organisations which could benefit from it?

26. Does the university have the balance right between central and devolved structures for promoting and forging links with industry and public service organisations?

Citizens

27. Does the university have specific policies and programmes that provide an incentive for faculty to become engaged with the local community?

28. What mechanisms are in place to promote an open dialogue between university and community leaders?

29. What role(s) do the students and academics play in engaging with the community through avenues such as volunteerism or the arts?

30. Does the university undertake projects (through course syllabus or on an ad hoc or organized basis) that respond to community needs and development?

31. Are there open fora to facilitate discussion between ‘town and gown’ that enables the community and industry to share their views and to challenge the priorities of the university?


Though not offering anything of an indicator-type approach, the reflective questions do point to key aspects of engagement.
4.2.6. RMIT University Indicators

Currently RMIT intends\(^1\) to measure a number of indicators that report on their “…major contributions to the communities [they] serve: satisfied, employable graduates and significant, relevant research” (SPF Community Indicators Working Group, 2002:4). Further to this, they (SPF Community Indicators Working Group, 2002:4) go on to note that its “…set of strategic indicators also includes space for indicators around partnerships in teaching in research.

There are three possible levels at which this can be measured:

- the partnerships themselves (quantity; quality; fitness for purpose)
- the activity generated through the partnerships (quantifiable; plus qualitative assessment)
- the learning and high-level capability outcomes (most significant; least quantifiable)

We also need to measure how the benefits accrue:

- to RMIT
- to direct partners of RMIT
- more broadly in developing the learning community or region through multiplier effects.”

The Working Group (2002:4-5) further proposed that:

- A typology of partnerships be developed to enable the assessment of the quality of the relationship and its productivity, along with the more straightforward measurement of the number of partnerships;
- Activity and outcomes generated through partnerships need to be measured. They propose that this be achieved through

\[\begin{array}{l}
\text{Identification and measurement of activity undertaken in partnership mode; and} \\
\text{The use of indicators to measure community and regional partnerships, such as (SPF Community Indicators Working Group, 2002:12-13):} \\
\text{PREFERRED INDICATORS} \\
\quad \text{Exemplar partnerships presented through case studies.} \\
\quad \text{Number and type of programs delivered in key regions (Local and Overseas)} \\
\quad \text{Number of courses/programs involving work-integrated learning in industry} \\
\quad \text{Number of courses/programs involving work-integrated learning in community} \\
\quad \text{Number of research projects undertaken in regions and with community} \\
\quad \text{Publications, conference papers etc related to scholarship of engagement} \\
\text{OTHER INDICATORS (NEED MORE WORK)} \\
\quad \text{Number of partnerships} \\
\quad \text{Nature of partnerships – formal (MOUs), informal} \\
\quad \text{Longevity and maturity of partnerships} \\
\quad \text{Cross-sectoral partnerships – portfolio of partnerships across different sectors (eg other education providers, health, local government, industry)} \\
\quad \text{Degree of integration with a broader coalition of partnerships} \\
\quad \text{Density of partnerships in key regions}
\end{array}\]

\(^1\) As will become clear in the next section of this report, this indeed still is an intention. We have been unable to find evidence of this being implemented.
4.2.7. Global Reporting Initiative

The Global Reporting Initiative “…is a multi-stakeholder process and independent institution who’s mission is to develop and disseminate globally applicable Sustainability Reporting Guidelines. These Guidelines are for voluntary use by organisations for reporting on the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of their activities, products, and services” (Global Reporting Initiative, n.d.:online). As an integral part of this project, a variety of indicator sets were developed (Global Reporting Initiative, 2002:42), including those relating to stakeholder engagement. These are:

- Basis for identification and selection of major stakeholders. This includes the processes for defining an organisation’s stakeholders and for determining which groups to engage.

- Approaches to stakeholder consultation reported in terms of frequency of consultations by type and by stakeholder group. This could include surveys, focus groups, community panels, corporate advisory panels, written communication, management/union structures, and other vehicles.

- Type of information generated by stakeholder consultations. Include a list of key issues and concerns raised by stakeholders and identify any indicators specifically developed as a result of stakeholder consultation.

- Use of information resulting from stakeholder engagements. For example, this could include selecting performance benchmarks or influencing specific decisions on policy or operations.

The approach is geared towards facilitating consistent annual reporting by major firms on all aspects of their operation. However, those indicators that relate to stakeholder engagement are limited in scope.
Given that we set out to provide a first cut of indicators that could be used to evaluate university-community engagement, we need to select the most appropriate set from the possible ones that emerged from our literature review. In trying to be as objective as possible, and remain within the rationale of what indicators are supposed to be (our operationalisation of ‘appropriate’), we base our selection on criteria that have proven their validity (Andrews et al., 1998; Cave et al., 1988), which are:

- **Relevance** – how does the indicator relate to the purposes and objectives of the institution?

- **Reliability** – assuming the indicator is available, how well does it reflect (an aspect of) community engagement?

- **Transparency** – does the indicator have a clear and unambiguous meaning?

- **Availability** – how straightforward is it to collect the required information for the indicator?

- **Auditability** – how easy is it to scrutinize the data that supports the indicator?

- **Cost** – how much will it cost in terms of time and resources to collect the information required for the indicator?

Since we are dealing with aggregate sets of indicators, protocols and questions, our assessment and valuation of the sets is an approximation rather than a precise science. Trying to do the latter in our considered opinion is an impossibility given the nature of the constituting elements of the different sets. Evaluation of the six sets against the six criteria provides the following picture (see Table 1).

### Table 1: An Evaluation of Six Indicator Sets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Russel Report Indicators</th>
<th>OECD</th>
<th>Charles &amp; Benneworth</th>
<th>Gibbons</th>
<th>RMIT</th>
<th>GRI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Auditability</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key**

- ++ = Highly appropriate
- + = Appropriate
- - = Somewhat appropriate
- - - = Not at all appropriate

Table 1: An evaluation of six indicator sets
Some comments on this table need to be made. First, it will be obvious that availability and auditability are very closely connected. If data is not there, it cannot be vetted. Second, we have made some informed judgements as to the availability criterion on the basis of a quick scan of institutional websites and public reports. This quick scan has not been the most fruitful component of this research project, in the sense that it showed a consistent and significant lack of available information when it comes to community engagement activity. The bottom line is that information on this topic is sparse. Although the various sets of indicators focus on different aspects of community engagement, at least partly, this in fact has little effect upon the availability criterion, meaning that the different types of information required are equally hard to come by. Given these caveats, we nevertheless can draw some conclusions. First, the Global Reporting Initiative, given its very specific focus and rationale, sits uneasily within the context of university-community engagement. It will not be used given its overall very low score. Second, the more qualitative approaches inferred in both the OECD and Gibbons’ protocols will not be used either, particularly given the high cost of data collection. It must be remembered that the project brief explicitly mentioned the avoidance of additional information burdens on the universities. Third, the remaining indicator sets differ little in terms of overall score. Given that the Russel Report indicators have the highest overall score and also provide the most comprehensive coverage of what in the broadest sense may be captured under the heading of community engagement, we have opted to continue the project with that set.

Conceptually, one would combine this indicator set with the engagement typology presented in Section 4.1 to construct an engagement matrix that would show both the width and the depth of a university’s engagement portfolio. However, before embarking on this tour, we thought it wise to first try and apply the indicator set itself. The rationale for this has been very simple: our quick scan of websites and reports had given us a very uneasy feeling as to the availability of data relating to the indicators. Rather than engage in building castles in the sky, we have therefore opted to first work with the indicator set.

In working with the indicator set we also decided to add a few categories on the basis of the earlier Eidos study on community engagement (see Winter et al., 2005) and from our reading of the international literature including the Association of Commonwealth Universities (2001) Charles and Benneworth (2002) and Garlick (2002 in Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance, 2005). In our considered opinion these additions gave an extra dimension to the set, in the sense of also explicating to what extent institutions have voiced their intentions regarding community engagement. The additions are: (i) Statement of intent – where are the intentions regarding community engagement expressed?, (ii) Governance – is there a dedicated PVC (or equivalent) position and what is the number of external representatives on governing bodies?, and (iii) Structural attention in the form of the existence of special persons, institutes or facilities. The results of this exercise are presented in the next section.
The objectives of this project were to (i) on the basis of an international inventory suggest a possible set of indicators that could be used to assess the extent of a university’s community engagement, whilst (ii) not posing additional reporting requirements on universities. A trial run consisting of an analysis of existing Victorian university reports and available other forms of data was undertaken to see to what extent the suggested set of indicators indeed could be viably used to assess community engagement activity. The outcomes are presented in Table 2. The results of our analysis were presented at the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) National Conference (Perth, July 12-14, 2006) to invite comments, critique and suggestions for improvement. Table 2 has been amended on the basis of these comments. More detailed information on this part of the project, including participant feedback, can be found in Appendix 3.

If we look at the top of the table, it appears that the coverage of information relating to the intent, governance and structural indicators is reasonable. Although “N” (does not feature) does appear, the overall impression is that the Victorian universities pay attention to community engagement through plans and reports, through specialist research centres, and to a somewhat lesser extent through dedicated offices and webpages. But then again, these are the qualitative indicators that are very closely related to the rhetoric of community engagement.

### Table 2: The availability of indicator information at Victorian Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT OF INTENT</th>
<th>Melbourne University</th>
<th>Victoria University</th>
<th>RMIT University</th>
<th>Swinburne University</th>
<th>University of Ballarat</th>
<th>La Trobe University</th>
<th>Deakin University</th>
<th>Monash University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notion of CE in Mission/Vision</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>CE addressed in Strategic Plan</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>CE reported upon in Annual Report</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y%</td>
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<td>Community Engagement Plan or some such</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dedicated Position (PVC, Community Relationships etc)</td>
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<td>Commercial Arm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Centres as Strategies of Community Engagement**</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>ADVISORY WORK#</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of invitations to speak at non-academic conferences (conferences in which the majority of participants were not academics)</td>
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<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
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<td>N/R</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of invitations to attend meetings of advisory committee of non academic</td>
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<td>Income from advisory work</td>
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<td>Y/N</td>
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<td>Y/N</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
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</table>
Unless otherwise stated, all data was sourced from official university webpages and selected faculties, schools and/or departments. The initial empirical data was collected during the period 24 April to 5 May 2006 and updated as a result of the feedback from the AUCEA Conference, see Appendix 3 for details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Melbourne University</th>
<th>Victoria University</th>
<th>RMIT University</th>
<th>Swinburne University</th>
<th>University of Ballarat</th>
<th>La Trobe University</th>
<th>Deakin University</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COMMERCIALISATION &amp; USE OF UNIVERSITY FACILITIES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total no. of days spent by external (non-academic) visitors using laboratories and testing facilities without payment</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of events run and organised by the university for public benefit</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of days spent by external (non-academic) visitors using university office and library facilities without payment</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTRACT RESEARCH WITH NON-ACADEMICS CLIENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of contract research carried out by the university</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of contract research deals (excluding follow-on contracts) signed by universities with non-academic organisations</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-ACADEMIC COLLABORATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of refereed publications authored with non-academics</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of non-academic organisations collaborating in research projects funded through Research Councils and charities</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of contributions (both in cash and in-kind) provided by non-academic collaborators in above projects</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FLOW OF ACADEMIC STAFF &amp; SCIENTISTS AND TECHNICIANS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of faculty members taking a temporary position in non-academic organisations</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of employees from non-academic organisation taking temporary teaching and/or research position in universities</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>N/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STUDENT PLACEMENTS AND OTHER LINKS WITH POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of students in sandwich courses and attending internship organised by the University</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
<td>Some Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate employment by field –</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**

- # Shaded indicators are sourced from Molas-Gallart (2002:67-79)
- * This data is sourced from Winter, Wiseman and Muirhead (225:47-8)
- ** This data is sourced from Winter, Wiseman and Muirhead (225"47-8)
- ^ Some Areas are generally in professional areas such as teaching, law, nursing
- * Not able to be accessed on website at the time of data collection
- % The Community Engagement Section of the La Trobe University Annual Report has been included as a good example as Appendix 5.
- ~ Data could be sourced from the Graduate Destination Survey

**Key**

- Y = Sufficient detail
- Y/N = Detail not particularly suited to indicator
- N = Does not feature
- N/R = Not reported
- N/A = Not applicable or not available
If we go further down the table, the abundance of “n/r” (not reported) and “Y/N” (detail not sufficient) becomes very apparent. With the exception of the two indicators “total number of events run and organised by the university for the public benefit” and “value of contract research carried out by the university” there is little there. “Number of students in sandwich courses…” is reported in varying degrees and as such is not available on a structural, institution-wide basis. And “Income from advisory work” often is presented in such a way that it actually is not clear whether or not we are dealing with advisory work. Information on the remainder of the indicators across the board is strikingly absent.

A number of reporting protocols have been developed (see Section 4.2) to facilitate the assessment of University performance in relation to their function as institutions of teaching, research and service. However, aside from those indicators that are linked to government administered formal reporting requirements, these protocols do not appear to lead a very active life when it comes to community and regional engagement. To the extent used, there seems to be a dominance of indicators to measure commercialisation, technology transfer and spin-offs for example. This might be because these are more straightforward to collect data upon than say the increase in social cohesion resulting from university-community engagement.

6.1 Discussion of results

The results of the trial run provide little cause for enthusiasm as to the usefulness of the approach. Our research suggests that at present there is insufficient information reported to even superficially understand the level of community engagement being undertaken by a university. Although our study focussed on universities in Victoria, this conclusion appears not be restricted to universities in Victoria, but we would argue would be the case throughout Australia. A quick scan of some universities in New South Wales and Queensland resulted in very comparable outcomes.

At the university level, typically the notion of university-community engagement is enshrined in Mission & Vision Statements and/or the Strategic Plan. Yet, these goals and objectives in general do not seem to be well supported by formal reporting in relating objectives to outcomes in a consistent manner2.

An obvious explanation for this would be that we have simply come up with the wrong set of indicators and that had others been used, such as the Comprehensive Assessment of the Scholarship of Engagement developed by Bringle and Hatcher (see Bringle et al., 2001) the outcomes of the study would have been different. Unfortunately, this argument does not hold up to empirical scrutiny. We have gone to great lengths to look for alternative indicators that may have been included in annual reports or that in one form or another were available somewhere in the institutional data. But also this, admittedly inductive, approach did not yield substantive results.

Reflecting further on our findings, we could argue that the information in fact is available but it is not readily accessible, which more or less was a prerequisite for our project. It is quite likely that this statement is true, based on our searches. But this then begs the questions: Why isn’t it accessible? Where is it located? One explanation for this conundrum is that this information is located in the minds of individual researchers or project leaders, who as part of their day-to-day activities engage with their communities but have no reason to report such activity. Which leads us to the next point.

There is no major incentive to report on engagement. It is very likely that this is the case, and perhaps this is where the argument for Third Stream Funding might come in. However, once such an incentive is introduced, then one outcome might be that the engagement activity that is reported and undertaken will over time become restricted to that activity which results in the best funding outcome - because let’s face it, most incentives are unfortunately crude levers of change. Piecemeal engagement activities may become the order of the day, with least effort for biggest return becoming the reason for much of the engagement activity, given the current climate.
of public resource scarcity. This is a far cry from what might be the ideal outcome, which would be to reward, motivate and support those staff who are, or would like to forge partnerships and collaboratively devise innovative solutions through their teaching, research and service activities, for example.

Generally, if community engagement is reported upon, it is done in a qualitative way, as can be seen from some of the annual reports. The problem with this type of reporting is that it provides the “broad brush” type of information rather than the more detailed information that in fact is needed to assess the extent of engagement. Typical of this are statements like “a range of exhibitions have been staged”, “many outstanding presentations”, and “a solid increase in commitment”. Where there is more detailed information, it generally is found at the faculty or, more often, department/school levels. Yet again we need to note that this type of reporting is ad-hoc, primarily qualitative (which is intended here as a statement of fact rather than implying that quantitative is to be preferred over qualitative), and by no means consistent across an institution. One school may report in detail on its engagement with the community, whilst another does not mention this at all. Whilst recognising that intra-institutional diversity is a fact of university life, this does become something of an issue if the university in its mission/vision states that it ‘values engagement between its campuses and the various communities it serves’ and that it ‘recognises the different needs of its communities in planning the educational and research programs of each campus’.

In the 2005 Eidos report Beyond Rhetoric it is argued that “the stated difficulties with measuring engagement warrants further investigation. While key performance indicators are now common parlance in universities, it can be asked whether community engagement can be comprehensively captured by such indicators” (Winter et al., 2005:78). The present report suggests that in theory it is possible to arrive at a set of indicators that perhaps may not be comprehensive, but that is robust enough in international comparative terms to serve as a workable operationalisation of the concept of engagement. This, however, does not solve the problem that these indicators in no way are part and parcel of the regular reporting repertoire of universities. It appears that at the ‘corporate level’ what universities report is what they are required to report through regulation, and community engagement is not part of this. Hence, these activities do not feature in a consistent and informative manner in documents or data available in the public domain. Examining the extent of community engagement on the basis of existing information consequently becomes an impossibility.
7. CONCLUSION

As with all research, a negative finding is an outcome as good as a positive one. Yet, given the importance of the issue in question, it leaves us with an unsatisfied feeling. Many will remember the fate that half of the organisations so proudly presented in the Peters and Waterman (1982) study met with: identified as exemplars of successful practice in their bestseller *In Search of Excellence* they went out of business in the next decennium. We sincerely hope that it will be different when we look at community engagement over the next five to ten years. That it will turn out to be the case that community engagement has become a dimension used by universities to differentiate themselves from others, implying both an institutionalisation and – consequently – a visibility through committed reporting. The other option, reporting through compliance because of yet another bureaucratic requirement, seems unattractive and counterproductive, ultimately not contributing to the excellence that this aspect of the university is in need of.
8. REFERENCES


Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) 2005, Funding Australian Universities for Community Engagement, A paper prepared by the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) to the AVCC on Third Stream Funding. 27 February 2006 from http://www.aucea.net.au/cgi-bin/articles/display.pl/a:353/Third_Stream_Funding_Response.html


Holland, B. 2001, 'Toward a definition and characterization of the engaged campus: Six cases', Metropolitan Universities, vol. 12, no. 3., pp. 20-29.


APPENDIX 1: THE RUSSEL GROUP INDICATORS


Appendix 1 Comprehensive list of potential indicators

Table 2 presents all the indicators we have considered for inclusion in a model to measure Third Stream activities. The table discusses in summary form the strengths and weaknesses of every indicator. A more complete analysis of the issue faced when developing indicators in each of the categories in our framework, can be found in the An analysis of potential indicators section of the main text. Indicators marked in light and dark grey can also found in our list of suggested indicators (Table 1 in the main text). The shading of the cells has also the same meaning as in Table 1. Light grey shading refers to indicators that are already collected somewhere in one way or another and would require relatively less effort to gather, organise and manage for the purposes of Third Stream measurement. In the darker grey shading we have marked the indicators that will need more effort to collect, but we still consider that their inclusion in a measurement model is feasible. In many cases these are new indicators that will need to be further defined and for which new data collection instruments will be required. Indicators in cells with a white background are those that, at this stage, would either be too difficult to collect or could easily be misinterpreted and therefore, have not been included in Table 1.

Table 2 Potential Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology commercialization</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of patent applications</td>
<td>It reflects innovations that are perceived to have a potential commercial value and provides a measure of the rate at which ideas with commercial potential are brought forward. It includes applications in any (national or foreign) patent office. Most of the indicators in this category can be based on the definitions used by the AUTM Survey.</td>
<td>No indication of the social and economic value of the innovations being commercialised, or of the market size and opportunities in the country where the patent is filed. They may provide incentives for universities to file more widely than it would seem appropriate from a commercial point of view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of patents awarded</td>
<td>As above. It provides a measure of the number of patent applications that are granted and therefore can be used as a &quot;quality indicator.&quot;</td>
<td>No indication of the social and economic value of the innovations being commercialised, or of the market size and opportunities in the country where the patent is filed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. licenses granted (including option agreements)</td>
<td>Reflects demand for innovations generated at universities.</td>
<td>Does not discriminate among licences; despite the knowledge that some licences generate more income than others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royalty income (including value of option fees)</td>
<td>Reflects the demand for university innovations. An indicator of commercial success, can therefore be used as an indirect quality measure. Over the medium term the indicator is likely to rather stable.</td>
<td>Distribution of income is very skewed, often with a single licence generating most of the income for a university. Revenue from royalties is also dependent on market conditions beyond the control of university staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median value of royalties (including option fees)</td>
<td>Reflects the demand for university innovations. It controls against the possible bias that can be introduced into income indicators by the possible extreme high value of very few inventions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. inventions disclosed and/or no. of researchers disclosing inventions</td>
<td>Direct measure of the number of inventions generated.</td>
<td>The disclosure process is part of the mandated US system. It is not used by British universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators on other forms of IPR (copyright, trademarks..).</td>
<td>Important in a number of areas such as software.</td>
<td>Lack of established data, collection methodologies and techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of confidentiality/non-disclosure/material transfer agreements.</td>
<td>An indicator of one of the important ways in which US universities commercialise their technology.</td>
<td>The disclosure process is part of the mandated US system. It is not used by British universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of technology licenses and/or option agreements having generated a high, predetermined level of income.</td>
<td>A more refined measure of economic value of licences and option agreements.</td>
<td>Levels of income from licences are contingent on shifting market conditions, beyond the control of universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patent applications as a % of inventions disclosed.</td>
<td>These ratios can be used to inform the management of Third Stream activities.</td>
<td>They are not adequate for comparing performance across organisations with very diverging levels of activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patents awarded as a % of patent applications.</td>
<td>These ratios can be used to inform the management of Third Stream activities.</td>
<td>They are not adequate for comparing performance across organisations with very diverging levels of activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology licenses &amp; option agreements as a % of patents awarded.</td>
<td>These ratios can be used to inform the management of Third Stream activities.</td>
<td>They are not adequate for comparing performance across organisations with very diverging levels of activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. &amp; value of products brought to market and based on technology licensed from the university.</td>
<td>Direct measure of the economic value of university commercialisation activities.</td>
<td>There is no established methodology to attribute a portion of the market value of a product to specific innovations that have contributed to their development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of exports of products based on technology licensed from the university.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of licensing, admin professionals and risk managers involved in commercialisation activities.</td>
<td>Input indicators focusing on the amount of effort expended to commercialise university intentions.</td>
<td>Their use could generate perverse effects encouraging higher expenditure without concern for results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on the above.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of litigation over infringement of university IPR.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Entrepreneurial activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of spin-offs created in the last 5 years.</td>
<td>Spin-offs are defined here as new firms that have financed (partially or fully) from university resources. They are an indicator of university efforts to exploit commercially a broad set of university capabilities and a mechanism for universities to conduct further customer-oriented research.</td>
<td>Does not measure either their size or their economic and social relevance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of current employees in spin-offs created in the last 5 years.</td>
<td>As above. In addition, it provides an indicator or the magnitude of this set of activities.</td>
<td>Growth of spin-offs may be attributable to market conditions or other factors unrelated to university activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover/ profits from spin-offs and commercial arms.</td>
<td>Measures the direct economic impact of spin-offs and commercial arms. Provides an indicator of the level of contract research that universities channel through commercial arms.</td>
<td>Many new science-based spin-offs can take a long time to generate income. Turnover-based indicators are not, in isolation, adequate to measure spin-off activity. Turnover and profit accruing from commercial arms is difficult to separate from that raised by spin-offs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development fund and loan facilities provided by universities to support startups</td>
<td>Focuses on an important aspect of university entrepreneurial activity. Data of this kind may already be available in some universities. These are metrics under development in institutes funded by the Science Enterprise Challenge</td>
<td>Input indicator. Its use could encourage higher expenditure without concern for outputs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity realisation (“cash-in for equity”)</td>
<td>A measure of success in university entrepreneurial activities</td>
<td>Depends on the perceived value of a company and on market conditions. Equity sales are a discrete event; the indicator is likely to be “humpy”. It is likely to take a long time between a venture is realised. It can disadvantage never technology transfer offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of academic staff holding equity in start-up and/or spin-off companies.</td>
<td>Input indicator that refers to a specific type involvement of academics in entrepreneurial activities, and the extent to which such involvement is widespread.</td>
<td>Direct indicators of spin-off and start-up activity are more adequate as a measurement of entrepreneurial activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of business plans funded by university financial sources.</td>
<td>Input indicators focusing on an important aspect of university entrepreneurial activity. Data of this kind may already be available in some universities.</td>
<td>Input indicators, do not focus on results. Value of the funding is a better indicator of the entrepreneurial effort made by the university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of start-up projects funded by university financial sources.</td>
<td>Start-ups are defined as companies founded by university academics or their students. They are often supported by the university.</td>
<td>The criteria to determine the extent to which a firm established by staff or students can be attributed to Third Stream activities are complex and cannot be operationalised through simple data gathering procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of start-ups founded in the last X years, their employees and turnover.</td>
<td>Value of university equity holdings in spin-off companies and commercial arms</td>
<td>Indicator of the economic value (and therefore magnitude) of entrepreneurial activities. Depending on the valuation system used, it could be easier to collect. Valuation systems differ. Most meaningful valuations will depend on market conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spin-offs survival rates.</td>
<td>Survival rates reflect spin-off success and will be less skewed than turnover or profit measures.</td>
<td>Difficult to develop an operational definition of survival. Firms in trouble may be taken over by other companies or their own management. Requires detailed information on ownership structure over time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advisory work**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of invitations to speak at nonacademic conferences (conferences in which the majority of participants were not academics).</td>
<td>Identifies positive demand and social value of university knowledge capabilities.</td>
<td>Indicator does not reflect the magnitude and importance of the events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of invitations to attend meetings of advisory committee of non academic organisations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from advisory work.</td>
<td>An indicator of the value of this activity.</td>
<td>Biased against unpaid advice (for instance to Parliamentary committees). Some of this income will be personal and the data will be impossible to collect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income derived from leasing/letting/hiring S&amp;T university facilities (laboratories and testing facilities).</td>
<td>Reflects demand for and social value of university facilities.</td>
<td>Biased toward paid use of facilities while there is evidence that external use is not always charged. Too strong an incentive to let research facilities may result in academics and students being driven out of laboratories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of days spent by external (non-academic) visitors using laboratories and testing facilities without payment.</td>
<td>Identifies demand and social value of university facilities and addresses the bias against unpaid use of facilities that would occur if only income indicators were used.</td>
<td>Data collection can be problematic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income derived from leasing/letting/hiring cultural and leisure facilities (e.g. theatres, conference rooms, sport centers).</td>
<td>Reflects demand and social value of university facilities, and provides an incentive for them to be made available to the community.</td>
<td>Biased toward paid use of facilities while there is evidence suggesting that use is not always charged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of events run and organized by the university for public benefit.</td>
<td>Reflects activities carried out by the university to contribute to local community welfare.</td>
<td>The success and magnitude of each of these activities are not being considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income derived from leasing/letting/hiring of office and library space to industry and social groups.</td>
<td>Reflects demands and social value of university facilities.</td>
<td>Biased toward paid use of facilities while there is evidence suggesting that use is not always charged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of days spent by external (non-academic) visitors using university office and library facilities without payment.</td>
<td>Identifies demand and social value of university facilities and address the bias against unpaid use of income-based indicators.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income derived from leasing/letting/hiring accommodation and other residential services.</td>
<td>Measure economic value.</td>
<td>The exploitation of residential real estate is not linked to the research and cultural activities that we consider part of Third Stream activity. Use of indicators of this type could provide incentives for universities to focus on “residential landlord” roles unrelated to their core functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of days spent by external (non-academic) visitor using university residential services free of charge.</td>
<td>Identifies social demand for residential property.</td>
<td>Indicator would reflect charitable roles that are unrelated to the Third Stream activities we are trying to measure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Commercialisation and use of university facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value of contract research carried out by the university.</td>
<td>Identifies the level of non-academic demand for research services from the university. These types of deals would be different from advisory contracts, in that they involve a research element.</td>
<td>The value of this activity is affected by complex market conditions and its distribution is likely to be very skewed with a few deals being of very high value. There may be difficulties in differentiating between contract research and advisory contracts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of contract research deals (excluding follow-on contracts) signed by universities with non-academic organisations.</td>
<td>It compensates for the possibility that a very limited set of activities may account for most of their total value. Considering the number of research</td>
<td>Does not indicate the social value of the activities measured. There may be difficulties in differentiating between contract research and advisory contracts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number and value of contract research deals carried out through commercial arms.</td>
<td>Contract research carried out through commercial arms can be a very important Third Stream activity.</td>
<td>In practice it can be difficult to distinguish between commercial arms and spin-offs and their activities. The turnover and profits of both types of activities are included as an indicator of entrepreneurial activity (above).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. and value of contract research deals carried out by academic individuals without using university-related administrative channels.</td>
<td>Such &quot;off-the-books&quot; activities can be substantial in some departments.</td>
<td>Trying to gather this data could be seen as an intrusion in the private affairs of academics. Very difficult to collect. Its inclusion could appear to reward behaviours that are unrelated to university Third Stream activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of different non-academic organizations who have signed contract research deals with the university.</td>
<td>It compensates for the possibility that a very limited set of activities may account for most of their total value. By including the number of organizations we introduce an incentive to improve the diffusion and diversity of research services offered by universities.</td>
<td>This indicator would be difficult to operationalise as it is very hard in practice to define what constitutes a different organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of research contract deals among firms, industrial associations, NGOs, government agencies and other organizations.</td>
<td>These indicators can be useful for management purposes.</td>
<td>They are distributional measures and do not provide aggregate measurement of Third Stream activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of median length and/or size of research contract deals.</td>
<td>Theses indicators can be useful for management purposes.</td>
<td>They are distributional measures and do not provide aggregate measurement of Third Stream activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-academic collaboration in academic research**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of refereed publications authored with non-academics.</td>
<td>Identifies substantial collaboration with non-academics in the production of academic work.</td>
<td>Indicator says little about the quality, magnitude, and social value of the activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of non-academic organisations collaborating in research projects funded through Research Councils, charities, and the EC Framework Programme.</td>
<td>Reflects the degree to which non-academics are involved in academic research projects.</td>
<td>The number of partners alone does not control for the size and magnitude of their collaboration. Also the terms of what constitutes &quot;collaboration&quot; need to be defined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of contributions (both in cash and in-kind) provided by non-academic collaborators in above projects.</td>
<td>Provides an indicator of the volume of the non-academic contribution.</td>
<td>Different techniques can be used to assess the value of in-kind contributions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Flow of academic staff and scientists and technicians**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of faculty members taking a temporary position in non-academic organizations.</td>
<td>Reflects a high degree of engagement and collaboration between universities and outside organizations and provide therefore an indicator of Third Stream activity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of employees from non-academic organizations taking temporary teaching and/or research positions in universities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of employees from non-academic organisations who have moved to</td>
<td>Potential impact indicator.</td>
<td>It is very difficult to determine the extent to which the move has been a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic jobs in university as a result of collaborations with the</td>
<td></td>
<td>consequence of previous collaboration, and therefore attributable to Third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>universities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stream activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of faculty who have moved to permanent employment in non-academic</td>
<td>Potential impact indicator.</td>
<td>It is very difficult to determine the extent to which the move has been a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organisations as a result of previous collaborations between both</td>
<td></td>
<td>consequence of previous collaboration, and therefore attributable to Third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organisations.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stream activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student placements and other links with potential employees

| No. of students in sandwich courses and attending internships organised | Measures a direct way of aligning teaching activities with societal needs. |
| by the university.                                                    |                                                                           |

Active alignment of teaching to economic and societal needs

| No. of credit earning courses established after a direct request from  | Identifies actions to align teaching capabilities to new social needs.   |
| non-academic organisations.                                            |                                                                           | Requests for the establishment of new courses must be traced and logged.   |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | The indicator may be laborious to collect.                                 |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | Too close an alignment with industrial needs may lead to short-termism in  |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | the definition of teaching curricula.                                      |
| No. and % of recent graduates not looking for work 18 months after     | An indirect indicator of the alignment of their training with societal     |
| graduation.                                                            | needs and demands.                                                       |                                                                           |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | Data collection will require substantial resources.                       |
| Rates of satisfaction among recent graduates and potential employees    | Direct indicators of the extent to which course curricula respond to the   |
| with the knowledge and sets of skills acquired through the course.      | needs and expectations of students and future employees.                  |                                                                           |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | Bias in favour of applied disciplines addressing industrial-related issues |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | (management, engineering).                                                |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | Difficulties in arriving at a precise definition of “closely related”.    |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | Requires tracking of alumni and extensive surveys. Difficult and expensive  |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | to collect.                                                               |
| No. or postgraduate students directly sponsored by industry.            | Provides an indicator of the degree to which specialised postgraduate      |
|                                                                         | courses address the needs of industry.                                    |                                                                           |
|                                                                         |                                                                           |                                                                           |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | Difficulties in arriving at a precise definition of “closely related”.    |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | Requires tracking of alumni and extensive surveys. Difficult and expensive  |
|                                                                         |                                                                           | to collect.                                                               |

Learning activities

<p>| Income received from non-credit bearing reaching and associated activities | Services to enhance learning in the community outside traditional credit-    |
| (courses, collaborative learning…).                                       | bearing courses are a key Third Stream activity. The income received from   |
|                                                                         | these activities provides an indicator of their size.                      |                                                                           |
|                                                                         | There may be a bias in favour of courses targeted to private sector         |
|                                                                         | organizations with ample economic resources, and against those aimed at the  |
|                                                                         | local community and generating lower levels of income.                     |                                                                           |
|                                                                         |                                                                           |                                                                           |
| No. of different institutions that have attended or have taught in non-  | An indicator of the extent of these activities which focuses on activities   |
| credit bearing teaching and associated activities.                       | targeted to professional audiences. It is not biased against communities with |
|                                                                         | limited economic resources.                                                |                                                                           |
|                                                                         | May be difficult to collect. Is difficult to define with clarity what        |
|                                                                         | constitutes a different institution.                                       |                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of times that academics have attended professional, non-academic conferences (conferences in which the majority of participants were not academics).</td>
<td>This is a proxy indicator of the extent to which academics are involved in professional activities targeted at non-academics and where networking with non-academic communities can take place.</td>
<td>No indication of the relevance of the conference of the type of participation of the academic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of non-academic clubs promoted by the university.</td>
<td>An indicator of formal attempts to establish networks outside academia.</td>
<td>Difficult to arrive at a precise definition of what is meant by a &quot;club&quot;.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Non-academic dissemination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. appearances by university academics in regional, national or international TV or radio.</td>
<td>Can be used as a proxy indicator of dissemination outside academia. Audiovisual media reaches audiences far in excess of those reached through publications and therefore provides a key avenue for non-academic dissemination.</td>
<td>There may difficulties in collecting data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of times university or its faculty members are mentioned in broadsheets because of their research and teaching activities.</td>
<td>Can be used as a proxy indicator for the non-academic impact of university teaching and research activities.</td>
<td>The indicator does not discriminate between &quot;positive&quot; and &quot;negative&quot; mentions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. or non peer-reviewed publications (excluding books and book chapters).</td>
<td>This is a proxy indicator for activities related to the dissemination of university work to non-academic constituencies. Books are excluded because they may be oriented to academic audiences even if they are not peer-reviewed.</td>
<td>There is no weight for the quality of importance of the publication, and its use could provide an incentive to indiscriminately pursue large numbers of small publication in all types of printed media.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX 2: RMIT INDICATORS

Attachment 4: Draft indicators against RMIT Goals and Approaches (from “Dissolving the Boundaries”)

### Regional and Local Communities

**Goal:** To make a difference to the communities and regions we serve.

**Approaches**

1. Establish and nurture sustainable partnerships between community and regional stakeholders and RMIT
2. Ensure that our education and research programs are shaped by community needs and aspirations
3. Build our capability to be agile and responsive to communities and regions
4. Explore and contribute to the scholarship of engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Preferred indicator/s</th>
<th>Other indicators (need more work)</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Establish and nurture sustainable partnership between community and regional stakeholders and RMIT</td>
<td>Exemplar partnerships presented through case studies</td>
<td>Number of partnerships, Nature of partnerships – formal (MOUs), informal, Longevity and maturity of partnerships, Cross-sectoral partnerships – portfolio of partnerships across different sectors (eg other education providers, health, local government, industry), Degree of integration with a broader coalition of partnerships, Density of partnerships in key regions.</td>
<td>Quantitative measures of partnership are held in a number of sites (eg Legal Office register of Memoranda of Understanding, Linkage Grant database). However, a count of partnerships is unlikely to yield useful information, as it will not consider the purpose of the partnership or its outcomes (see the discussion above). For the case-study concept to be effective, we will need to develop a format or checklist which enables comparisons to be drawn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ensure that our education and research programs are shaped by community needs and aspirations</td>
<td>Number and type of programs delivered in key regions (Hamilton, East Gippsland, Vietnam), Number of courses/programs involving work-integrated learning in industry, Number of courses/programs involving work-integrated learning in community, Number of research projects undertaken in regions and with community</td>
<td>Other useful information may be around process, for example the existence and operation of consultative mechanisms like the Hamilton Community Advisory Committee.</td>
<td>The extent and outcomes of teaching and research conducted in regional and community settings are the most useful monitoring tool to manage these activities. We need to improve how we collect this information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Build our capability to be agile and responsive to communities and regions</td>
<td>No major indicator determined yet</td>
<td>Application of models developed in one region/community to other communities/regions, Professional development of staff in relation to partnerships</td>
<td>Need to develop this further in the framework of principles for engagement and responsiveness (why are we responding? And to what?). This strategy also relates strongly to the strategic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

42
Explore and contribute to the scholarship of engagement.

- Publications, conference papers etc related to scholarship of engagement
- Impact on systems – increased flexibility in infrastructure and processes
- Evidence of increased ability to assemble learning setting wherever we are (e.g. learning systems – project based, 24/7, empowerment and curiosity; the measurement of learning is that change has occurred).
- Recruitment and reward strategies to recognize community engagement
- Development of capability in action research/mode 2 research
- Collaborative research projects (outside standard research data collections)
- Evidence of take-up of knowledge coming in from community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Preferred indicator/s</th>
<th>Other indicators (need more work)</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Explore and contribute to the scholarship of engagement.</td>
<td>Publications, conference papers etc related to scholarship of engagement</td>
<td>Development of capability in action research/mode 2 research</td>
<td>This is also linked through action research to developing RMIT’s capability and to the outcomes of partnership development and meeting community needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX 3: FEEDBACK ON PAPER TO THE AUCEA CONFERENCE

On 13 July 2006 the authors presented a paper *Once Upon a Time in Victoria: Viability and use of performance indicators to assess community engagement* to the 3rd Annual AUCEA National Conference 2006 - “Embedding University Community Engagement: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly” in Perth. This paper presented the findings of the research project to a diverse audience of university executives, administrators, researchers and practitioners in the area of university-community engagement, and community practitioners. The purpose of this in essence was to validate the methodology, data and findings with a group of informed practitioners and observers. Phrased differently, our findings have been subjected to an interactive form of peer review.

The comments and feedback are presented in the table below with the responses of and actions taken by the authors in the adjacent column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section in this report to which the comment relates</th>
<th>Comment from audience</th>
<th>Response by the authors of the report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.2.1</td>
<td>The report states that “A number of reporting protocols have been produced to facilitate the assessment of University performance in relation to their function as institutions of teaching, research, and service. However, aside from those that are linked to government administered formal reporting requirements, they are under used.” This reference to ‘under used’ is unsubstantiated.</td>
<td>Change wording as this is a fair comment that easily can result in confusion. Can also be interpreted as a normative statement. Report amended accordingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5</td>
<td>Section 5 outlines the selection criteria used to choose the indicators set. A comment was made that because our definition of Relevance – how does the indicator relate to the purposes and objectives of the institution? – does not include community we are missing an important dimension. If we included this, the OECD indicator set may have scored more highly.</td>
<td>It would be inappropriate to include the ‘community’ in this criterion because the ‘university’ is the object of study, not the community. We are not investigating the relevance of university activities for the community – that would be an entirely different study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Table 2                                           | Some of the data is incorrect:  
- There is a dedicated PVC at Swinburne and Melbourne  
- Monash university data not included | These data points have now been included (though not falling within the definition of ‘readily available data’). Monash was included in our analysis and report. Due to technical problems it was inadvertently left off the table in the hard copy version of the conference paper. This problem has now been rectified and the data for Monash included. |
<p>| Table 2                                           | What was the source of this data, websites only? Should also look at the AUQA reports, local newspapers, university magazines. | Relevant data from the AUQA reports has been incorporated into Table 2 and as Appendix 4. It is our belief that searching local newspapers and university magazines may yield some results, but would not give us the data required, nor would it be in a consistent form that would match with the requirements of the indicators. The data sources used are not websites ‘only’ but all publicly reported materials by universities (or as best an approximation of the ‘all’ criterion as feasible within the context of the project). Websites, inter alia, should not be seen as ‘just a site’ – they very often are the first contact point when looking for something from a university. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section in this report to which the comment relates</th>
<th>Comment from audience</th>
<th>Response by the authors of the report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Some universities in Victoria are dual sector, which may indicate a greater level of engagement than found in this analysis and may require different indicators.</td>
<td>This could be a valid point. The TAFE component has not been taken into account, so we do not know how well the indicator set could work for this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>RE: Deakin’s data: “We have had a ‘Community Responsibilities Functional Area Plan’ on the VC’s website for 3 years. While it is not called a Community Engagement Plan, it does cover all the fields usually covered. The Annual Reporting is widely circulated each year, I am perplexed why ‘not available’ is listed. Was Monash assessed?</td>
<td>At the time of the empirical research, the Community Functional Area Plan and the Annual Report were not accessible on the website. Both the Plan and the Annual report have now accessed and relevant data included. Monash was analysed (as noted above) and the data for it now appears in the table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Completely agree with the overall findings of the report and not surprised at all by the finding that the information needed for the indicators does not exist in publicly available documents in any consistent form.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Universities do not report this information because there is no incentive to do so, so managers do not give it any attention.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 4: EXCERPTS FROM AUQA AUDITS

During the special session at the AUCEA conference (Perth, July 12-14, 2006) it was suggested that by not taking into account institutional information provided for the purpose of the AUQA Audit, a substantive source of useful information was excluded from the present report. We assessed the information included for the AUQA audits and present the highlights below to illustrate the state of play. Whilst adding to the overall picture, it does not change the conclusions of the study.


The University needs to be more proactive in communicating its achievements to its various community stakeholders, especially in relation to its research activities and achievements. The University has recognised the need to “formalise an annual program of public events on Deakin’s campuses in 2005 that strengthen the partnerships between the University and its local communities” (Performance Portfolio, p.65) and the Panel endorses this.

AUQA 2005, Report of an Audit of Deakin University, February, pg. 34.

For a number of years a Warrnambool Community Reference Group has operated as an advisory group to the Vice-Chancellor on matters relating to the University’s activities in South West Victoria. In 2004, a similar group was established for the Geelong area. … It is clear that they value the opportunities the reference group meetings provide to learn more about current University activities, to provide comment on these and to develop relationships with fellow reference group members which have led to individual business or other collaborative ventures. Clearly the reference groups have been a worthwhile and positive development but the Panel considers that there is additional scope for the University to use these groups as active participants in the identification of ways the University can contribute to these communities.


There is still an opportunity for the University to gain better leverage from its regional presence to develop regionally-relevant research programs. Thus far, the University’s regional efforts have focused predominantly on teaching activities. The Audit Panel met people across a range of campuses, both staff and external stakeholders, who indicated a strong desire for the substance of the regional linkages to be more steeped in research opportunities and research application focused on the needs of these communities. This is not only in terms of promoting the University’s research to the region, but also in terms of the region having channels whereby it may raise research possibilities with the University. It may be that the RABs could assist with creating and stimulating these channels (Section 5.2).

AUQA 2003, Report of an Audit of RMIT University, December, pg. 41.

The University notes in its Performance Portfolio that:
“much of the partnership work that takes place within and on behalf of RMIT occurs at a very local, almost individual, level. We doubt the benefits of systematising our approach to this work, if in the process it means slowing down and bureaucratizing the instinct of staff for partnership. Our work to date has been to nurture this instinct, to provide support and checks against risk, but not seek to standardise and control. At the most we would wish to be more fully aware of actual and potential partnerships in order to be able to nurture them” (p. 58).
As the University correctly observes, measuring the outcomes of community engagement work is difficult. To progress this, the University has formed a working group to consider the criteria for benchmarking and performance measurement of community engagement. Some scoping work for this project has been undertaken but it is at a very preliminary stage. The Panel endorses the University’s efforts to address the difficult question of performance measurement in community engagement.
APPENDIX 5: EXAMPLE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORTING

Below is included the Community Engagement section of the La Trobe Annual Report\(^4\) as an example of good reporting. They also present a separate section on Regional Engagement p. 43-50, which has not been included here.

**Strategic direction:** To enhance engagement of the University with the communities it serves.

**Outcomes and Indicators:**

**Outcome 1. Greater coordination of and coherence in University community service activities.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of a University Community Engagement Strategy</td>
<td>A working group chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Quality and Community) has completed preparation of a Community Engagement framework and plan aligned to the University Act and Strategic Plan 2005-2008. It is based on two way knowledge transfer through engaged teaching and research. The plan is in the process of being taken to external members of the University community for comment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of Community Engagement Strategy</td>
<td>Implementation to await review of University Strategic Plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome 2. Mutually supportive partnerships with business, professional and cultural communities as well as those communities in which the University’s campuses are located.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University support of cultural and community activities (galleries, cultural activities and festivals)</td>
<td>Events that have been held across the regional campuses include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Albury-Wodonga Campus:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Jonathan Mann Memorial Lecture (Public Lecture)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Michael Joseph Savage Memorial Lecture (Public Lecture)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Faculty of Health Sciences – Dean’s Lecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Faculty of Law and Management – Dean’s Lecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Art History public lecture series (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences – Albury- Wodonga and Albury Regional Art Gallery)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Financial and in-kind support at Ngan Girra Festival</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Financial and in-kind support at Hot House Theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wodonga Diamonds (Soccer) Sports facility.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Beechworth Campus:</td>
<td>The campus has continued its George Briscoe Kerfered Orations as the public lecture series in 2005 with Professor Henry Brodaty AO delivering the oration titled “Ageing: it’s all in your mind” to over 250 members of the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera in the Alps was again held on the Beechworth Campus on the Australia Day weekend in 2005. The event was attended by in excess of 3,800 people. The University continues to provide a $2,500 yearly Scholarship to support the young Chorister Scholars attending the event.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Beechworth Arts Council continues to use the facilities of the Campus for the Artist in Residence program and a number of small events throughout the year. The Council elected a new committee late in 2005. We have held a number of meetings with a view to expand their activities on the campus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Beechworth Theatre Company also continues to use the facilities of the Campus for their annual production with is held in the Bijou Theatre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In conjunction with the Beechworth Rotary Club, Mr. John McCubbin, the Beechworth Police and the local community we are in the process of renovating (at no cost to the University) the old carpenters store into a boxing training gym for the Youth of Local Community this facility will be open late January 2006. The University signed the Indigo Shire Liquor Accord in December 2005.

The Campus donated an obsolete computer to the Montessori Play group, the Beechworth Play group and the Beechworth Child Care centre which are all located on the Campus when the student computer lab was upgraded in 2005.

At Bendigo Campus:
La Trobe University is a major sponsor of the Bendigo Art Gallery and has a named gallery. There was an exhibition of the La Trobe collection in November 2005, and La Trobe was a sponsor of the Cecil Beaton exhibition.

The University is a partner with OlivOZ and AlphaLaval on a research collaboration that was recognized by the 2005 BHERT regional community engagement award.

The University continued its support of sport within the local community through its sponsorship of the Bendigo stage of the 2005 Jayco Herald Sun Tour and the Mountain Bike Orienteering National Championships.

Staff from the Bendigo Campus took a leading role in the Bendigo 25+ Community Planning Initiative, the Bendigo Secondary Schools redevelopment plan, the Bendigo Broadband Initiative, and took over as the Chair of Education Bendigo.

The Anniversary Day celebrations, a gathering of La Trobe University and Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE staff to mark the anniversary and history of tertiary education in Bendigo, including a street procession was very successful.

The main public lectures for 2005 included:
- the Sir John Quick Bendigo Lecture presented by Professor Robert Manne, ‘The Strange Case of Cornelia Rau’, and;

These lectures were well attended with 200 attending the Quick Lecture and an audience of 150 at the Worner Lecture.

Other public lectures included three ‘Downtown Lectures’, a lecture series organized by the La Trobe University Alumni, Bendigo Chapter and held at the new Visual Arts Centre. The lectures this year included:
- Professor Tranq Thomas, ‘Towards a Happy, Health Old Age’
- Mr Owen Davies, Bendigo Bank, ‘A bloody good story; an inside look at Community Banking’, and;
- Ms Linda Beilharz, (the first woman to ski to the South Pole) ‘The World’s last Wilderness’.

The attendance at these lectures was 45–70.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In conjunction with the Beechworth Rotary Club, Mr. John McCubbin, the Beechworth Police and the local community we are in the process of renovating (at no cost to the University) the old carpenters store into a boxing training gym for the Youth of Local Community this facility will be open late January 2006. The University signed the Indigo Shire Liquor Accord in December 2005. The Campus donated an obsolete computer to the Montessori Play group, the Beechworth Play group and the Beechworth Child Care centre which are all located on the Campus when the student computer lab was upgraded in 2005. At Bendigo Campus: La Trobe University is a major sponsor of the Bendigo Art Gallery and has a named gallery. There was an exhibition of the La Trobe collection in November 2005, and La Trobe was a sponsor of the Cecil Beaton exhibition. The University is a partner with OlivOZ and AlphaLaval on a research collaboration that was recognized by the 2005 BHERT regional community engagement award. The University continued its support of sport within the local community through its sponsorship of the Bendigo stage of the 2005 Jayco Herald Sun Tour and the Mountain Bike Orienteering National Championships. Staff from the Bendigo Campus took a leading role in the Bendigo 25+ Community Planning Initiative, the Bendigo Secondary Schools redevelopment plan, the Bendigo Broadband Initiative, and took over as the Chair of Education Bendigo. The Anniversary Day celebrations, a gathering of La Trobe University and Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE staff to mark the anniversary and history of tertiary education in Bendigo, including a street procession was very successful. The main public lectures for 2005 included: the Sir John Quick Bendigo Lecture presented by Professor Robert Manne, ‘The Strange Case of Cornelia Rau’, and; the Worner Research Lecture presented by Professor Hal Swerissen, ‘Health &amp; Ageing in 2005: the boomers go grey. These lectures were well attended with 200 attending the Quick Lecture and an audience of 150 at the Worner Lecture. Other public lectures included three ‘Downtown Lectures’, a lecture series organized by the La Trobe University Alumni, Bendigo Chapter and held at the new Visual Arts Centre. The lectures this year included: Professor Tranq Thomas, ‘Towards a Happy, Health Old Age’ Mr Owen Davies, Bendigo Bank, ‘A bloody good story; an inside look at Community Banking’, and; Ms Linda Beilharz, (the first woman to ski to the South Pole) ‘The World’s last Wilderness’. The attendance at these lectures was 45–70.</td>
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<th>Indicator</th>
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The La Trobe University Alumni, Bendigo Chapter sponsored the 50th anniversary Bendigo Teachers College, class of 1955 reunion with 71 participants.

At Mildura Campus:
- Mildura and Wentworth Arts Festival
- Mildura Writers' Weekend
- Palimpsest
- FHUSS Dean’s Lecture Series
- Alfred Deakin Innovation Lecture

At Mt Buller Campus:
- World Aerials
- Victorian Interschool Snow Sports
- La Trobe University Photographic Exhibition
- Mt Buller Art Show
- Porsche Sprint
- Craic Irish Festival
- Host to National Alpine Museum (unique in Australia)
- Provision of La Trobe University Sports Centre and Cinema for the public, as well as students
- Provision of Physiotherapy/ Massage service for community during winter.

At Shepparton Campus:
La Trobe University, Shepparton Campus in conjunction with The Ethnic Council of Shepparton Districts, pleyed host to a Sub Saharan information session in November 2005. Dr Apollo Nsubuga-Ryobi & Dr Joanne Gardiner presented papers on the day.

La Trobe University is a key sponsor of the International Ceramics Award at the Shepparton Art Gallery.

In November La Trobe University supported the Town & Gown Dinner hosted by the Greater Shepparton Council. This occasion brought together representatives of the many educational institutions operating in the region, local business people and counselors.

The Shepparton Campus also held its first named public lecture in 2005. Professor Michael Osborne delivered the inaugural John Furphy Memorial Lecture. The title of the lecture was 'The Parthenon throughout the Ages'.

While the University currently does not have a system in place for collecting this data centrally the Office of Engagement and Enterprise and the Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities (CSRC) record a significant number of links between La Trobe and the business community. In 2005, there were 134 links between regional campuses and local business, industry and professional organizations.

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<th>Indicator</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number of partnerships with business</td>
<td>While the University currently does not have a system in place for collecting this data centrally the Office of Engagement and Enterprise and the Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities (CSRC) record a significant number of links between La Trobe and the business community. In 2005, there were 134 links between regional campuses and local business, industry and professional organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of staff participating in partnerships with business</td>
<td>See comment above.</td>
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### Outcome 3. Effective mechanisms for close and productive dialogue with the University.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>2003</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Regional Advisory Board meetings:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albury-Wodonga</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bendigo</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mildura</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepparton</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Advisory Board reports to University</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in Regional Advisory Board meetings</td>
<td>Regional Advisory Board meetings are generally well attended by both internal and external board members. Frequency of meeting has been steady, with Shepparton demonstrating an increase again in meeting frequency between 2004 and 2005. Nearly all meetings were reported to University Council in 2005, which was a significant increase on the number reported in 2004.</td>
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| Number of community engagement activities involving University participation | While the University currently does not have a system in place for collecting this data centrally, the Office of Engagement and Enterprise and the Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities (CSRC) record a significant number of local initiatives such as executive training, seminars, public lectures and consultative contracts in the community. In 2005, there were 72 such community engagement activities involving University participation. |